DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 274 448 PS 016 072

TITLE Towards Universalization of Primary Education in Asia and the Pacific: Country Studies--China.

INSTITUTION United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Bangkok (Thailand). Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific.

PUB DATE 84

NOTE 48p.; In: "Towards Universalization of Primary Education in Asia and the Pacific: Country Studies"; see PS 016 069.

AVAILABLE FROM UNIPUB, 10033/F, Martin Luther King Jr. Highway, Lanham, MD 20706-4391 (Complete volume $52.50 in U. S. funds).

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS *Educational Change; Educational History; *Educational Objectives; *Educational Policy; *Elementary Education; *Equal Education; Foreign Countries; Population Growth; *Special Schools

IDENTIFIERS *China

ABSTRACT

This publication discusses the provision of primary education to children in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Chapter 1 offers a general survey, focusing on the historical background of education since the 1949 revolution, the new school system, educational administration, primary education, and educational finance. Chapter 2 reports state policy for making elementary education universal. Particular attention is given to special purpose schools, controlled population growth, and educational policy concerning regulations for full-time schools, reform of the school system, textbook production, and training primary school teachers. Chapter 3 briefly describes the PRC's project and plan of universal primary education. Chapter 4 presents census data on enrollment, discusses educational problems, and reports proposals for raising the quality of primary education. (RH)

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Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development

ED274448

Towards Universalization of Primary Education in Asia and the Pacific

Country Studies

CHINA

PS 016072

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UNESCO REGIONAL OFFICE
FOR EDUCATION IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
Bangkok, 1984

This volume is one of a series of National studies of the progress being made towards the universalization of primary education undertaken by the following Member States:

Bangladesh	Papua New Guinea
China	Philippines
India	Republic of Korea
Indonesia	Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
Nepal	Sri Lanka
Pakistan	Thailand

Towards universalization of primary education in Asia and the Pacific; country studies – China [compiled by] the Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development, Bangkok, Unesco, 1984.

39 p. (Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development)

1. EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – CHINA. 2. PRIMARY EDUCATION – CHINA. 3. UNIVERSAL EDUCATION – PROGRAMMES – CHINA. 4. EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS – CHINA. I. Unesco. Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok. II. Title. III. Series.

372.95
372.951

© Unesco 1984

Published by the
Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific
P.O. Box 1425, General Post Office
Bangkok 10500, Thailand

Printed in Thailand

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BKR/84/OPE/356-800

Preface

Universalization of primary education (UPE) is one of the major priority goals of countries in the region of Asia and the Pacific. The developing countries in particular, are now vigorously engaged in the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programmes aimed at making adequate and suitable opportunities for primary education available as soon as possible for all children and young people.

In 1983, as part of a major project under the Asian Programme of Educational Innovation for Development (APEID) on the Universalization of Education, 12 countries in the region undertook national studies. The national studies were conducted to analyse the stage reached by the countries in UPE, and the problems encountered by them in providing educational opportunities to all children at the primary level; to review significant new and current developments in programmes and projects which the countries have undertaken in order to expand and improve primary education; and to contribute to achieving the target of primary education for all children. The studies were conducted by national institutes and professional groups under the guidance of high level committees of the Ministries of Education in the respective countries.

On completion of the national studies, a Regional Review Meeting was held in November 1983 which undertook an in-depth analysis of the methodologies of the national studies and examined their findings. The meeting also made suggestions for improving and updating the national studies tabled for review.

Following the recommendations of the review meeting, study teams in the participating countries have revised and updated the national studies. The present publication is an outcome of the collaborative and co-operative efforts of the member countries in understanding the progress made in the universalization of primary education, the nature and extent of problems and issues and their implications for achieving UPE in the region before the end of this century.

This series which provides a comparative view of the position of and progress made in UPE has been published with the view that the countries in the region, in their bid to step up measures for UPE, will find the information, experiences and conclusions useful in pursuing the goal of 'education for all' with a new vigor by drawing on the experiences of other countries with the same goals and objectives.

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Chapter One

GENERAL SURVEY

Historical background

The establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949 ushered in a new period of historical development, i.e., the period of socialist revolution and construction. By 1982 there were over 180 million students studying in the colleges and middle and primary schools. Add to this the number of students studying in other kinds of schools, and the total was over 207 million, or 20 per cent of the nation's population. The number of institutions of higher learning has grown at a rapid pace, from 598 in 1978 to 715 in 1982. While the number of middle and primary schools has decreased as compared with the peak years (1977 for middle schools and 1975 for primary schools), most have grown in size, and are more rationally distributed and organized; and teaching quality has in general been raised.

Education has had its ups and downs in the process of successive reforms, readjustment and improvement. Though achievements constituted the major aspect, there is no denying that there have been some shortcomings and even mistakes. The development of education in post-liberation China can be roughly divided into three periods.

The first period (1949-1965) from the birth of the People's Republic of China to the eve of the 'cultural revolution' saw education undergoing a basically healthy process of reform, reorganization and development, and an education system suited to China's needs. However, education suffered a major setback in the years 1958-1961. The main shortcomings and mistakes committed in these years were: doing things without giving due consideration to the actual conditions, going against the objective laws and the tendency to exaggerate achievements. All this resulted in a deterioration of the quality of education.

The second period (1966-1976) was the decade of 'cultural revolution'. This was a disastrous decade which brought the most serious setbacks and losses to the Chinese people in the post-liberation years. The damage done to education can be summed up like this: schools in the cities suffered more than those in the rural areas, and institutions of higher learning were most seriously affected; middle schools suffered to a lesser degree and primary schools were the least affected. Therefore, despite the serious damage done to education, where the schools were least affected – notably primary schools in the rural areas – schools still achieved numerical development although teaching quality plummeted.

The third, and present, period started in 1976 and led China into a new period of historical development.

Because of the various setbacks and losses, education in China still lags behind that of the developed countries. Elementary education is still not universal in many parts of the countryside. In 1982, China had 117,627 million school-age children and 109,579 million of them, or 93.16 per cent, were in school. In the rural areas, 92.25 per cent were in school. Less than half of China's 2,190 counties attained a rate higher than 95 per cent; in 389 counties, the rate was below 85 per cent. The rate of students who did not quit school half way and the rate of up-to-standard pupils were also low. In a few mountain areas, remote border regions and poor areas, only 60 per cent of the children stayed on in school, and only 30 per cent of them were up to standard. This shows that the popularization of elementary education in China is still an arduous task. The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and State Council have set forth the goal to popularize junior middle school education in all the cities, and primary school education in most of the rural areas, by the end of the 1980s. The writers believe that this goal is attainable.

On the eve of the founding of the People's Republic, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference was held in September 1949. Acting as the National People's Congress, it adopted the Common Programme which served as the provisional Constitution. In it were stipulations concerning the nature, tasks, content, system and methods of education in China. These served as the earliest legal basis for the rules and regulations governing China's

education. The First National People's Congress (NPC), held in September 1954, promulgated China's first Constitution. Amendments were made to it at the Fourth NPC in 1975 and the Fifth NPC in 1978. All the three Constitutions have special articles concerning education. Due to the rapid development of events in the country, the 1978 Constitution in many respects no longer tallied with the actual conditions and could not meet the needs of the state life. So the Fifth Session of the Fifth NPC held in December 1982 adopted a new Constitution, which attaches greater importance to the development of education in China than the previous two Constitutions. The provisions laid the legal foundation for the future development of education in China.

Article 19 of the new Constitution says:

> The State develops socialist educational undertakings and works to raise the scientific and cultural level of the whole nation.
>
> The state runs schools of various types, makes primary education compulsory and universal, develops secondary, vocational and higher education and promotes pre-school education.
>
> The state develops educational facilities of various types in order to wipe out illiteracy and provide political, cultural, scientific, technical and professional education for workers, peasants, state functionaries and other working people. It encourages people to become educated through self-study.
>
> The state encourages the collective economic organization, state enterprises and undertakings and other social forces to set up educational institutions of various types in accordance with the law.
>
> The state promotes the nationwide use of *Putonghua* (Common Speech based on Beijing Pronunciation).

Article 24 says:

> The state strengthens the building of socialist spiritual civilization through spreading education in high ideals and morality, general education in discipline and the legal system, and through promoting the formulation and observance of

rules of conduct and common pledges by different sections of the people in urban and rural areas.

The state advocates the civic virtues of love for the motherland, for the people, for labour, for science and for socialism; it educates the people in patriotism, collectivism, internationalism and communism and dialectical and historical materialism; it combats capitalist, feudalist and other decadent ideas.

Article 46 says:

The state promotes the all-round moral, intellectual and physical development of children and young people.

The Constitution has also stipulations concerning the position and role of teachers as part of the intelligentsia; the freedom for citizens to engage in educational undertakings in the interest of the people; the female and male enjoying equal position and rights in receiving education; the separation of religion from education; the support for education among minority nationalities; the rights and duties of parents in educating their children; the tasks and goals of education; and the power of people's government at all levels in administering education.

As the fundamental law of the land, the Constitution has supreme legal force. But it has only laid down some principles concerning the major issues in education. It is therefore necessary to formulate and promulgate a series of rules and regulations concerning education to ensure the implementation of the provisions in the Constitution. These laws and rules roughly fall into two categories: first, the various educational laws formulated and promulgated by organs of power through legal procedures; second, decisions and decrees formulated and promulgated by government organs, which are compulsory and have the force of laws, such as government decisions, directives, decrees, provisional regulations, provisional rules, regulations, rules and circulars and other administrative rules and regulations. Under this system, the laws and regulations formulated and released by the various localities should not contravene those formulated by the higher authorities.

A new school system

The school system is determined by the age of the students, the social system as well as the political, economic and cultural development. It is also influenced, to varying degrees, by the country's history and its nationalities as well as the evolution and development of school systems in foreign countries. Since the founding of New China, the school system has evolved and grown precisely under the influence of these factors. In the early post-liberation years, the newly liberated areas continued, for the time being, to adopt the old school system with certain reforms. But the old system could hardly serve the needs of the nation's political, economic and cultural construction and social life. In October 1951, the Central People's Government (then Government Administration Council) promulgated the Decision on Reforming the School System, in which a new system was instituted. The new system consisted of children's education; elementary education; secondary education; higher education; political schools and classes at various levels; as well as various remedial schools, correspondence schools and special-purpose schools.

The salient features of this school system were: first, it provided more schooling opportunities for workers, peasants and their children who practically had no access to education in the old society; second, it adequately met the needs of the cadres at various levels and in various fields; third, it affirmed the position of various technical schools and spare-time schools in the educational system. In the mid-1950s and early 1960s necessary revisions were made to the school system and the new elementary education was added in the light of the changes in the situation and conditions. The reform included the suspension of quick-course middle and primary schools for workers and peasants and the abolition of short-term, temporary political schools and training classes with political education as their main task. Meanwhile, the policy of 'walking on two legs'[1] and running schools in diverse forms was implemented.

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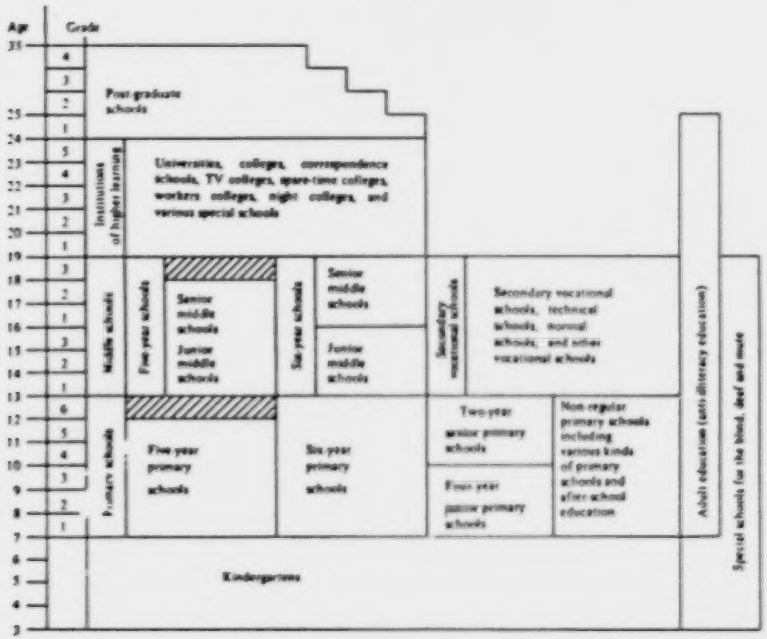
[1] The policy of "walking on two legs" refers to the policy set forth at the Second Plenary Session of the Eighth Party Central Committee held in May 1958 for socialist construction in China. It means the simultaneous development of industry and agriculture, the simultaneous development of heavy industry and light industry, industries run by the central authorities and those run by the localities, production with both indigenous and foreign methods, and the simultaneous development of large, medium-sized and small enterprises.

Later, this policy of simultaneous development was applied to many other fields, meaning that unitary forms and methods should be avoided in all fields of endeavour, and whatever measures to be taken should all be suited to the local conditions so as to arouse the enthusiasm of all. Those educational organizations run by the state should coexist with those run by the collectives. To provide school funds, state appropriations should be supplemented by money raised by the collectives themselves.

Other changes were made during the 'cultural revolution', which in the main consisted of shortening the length of schooling and changing schools for different purposes into schools of the same kind. Now it is clear that such changes were improper and divorced from reality. With the restructuring, reforming and development of China's educational undertakings, the school education system is gradually being perfected. Figure 1 shows the schools system in China today.

Figure 1. The schools system in China


Age
Grade
Post-graduate schools
Universities, colleges, correspondence schools, TV colleges, spare-time colleges, workers colleges, night colleges, and various special schools
Institutions of higher learning
Middle schools
Five year schools
Senior middle schools
Junior middle schools
Six year schools
Senior middle schools
Junior middle schools
Secondary vocational schools
Secondary vocational schools, technical schools, normal schools, and other vocational schools
Primary schools
Five year primary schools
Six year primary schools
Two-year senior primary schools
Four-year junior primary schools
Non-regular primary schools including various kinds of primary schools and after-school education
Adult education (anti-illiteracy education)
Special schools for the blind, deaf and mute
Kindergartens

Children's education is pre-school education which falls into two stages: nurseries for children 1 to 3 years old (not shown in the figure) and kindergartens for those 3 to 7 years old. General education is composed of primary schools and middle schools. Some primary schools follow a five-year system; others adopt a six-year system. Primary schools in the less developed mountain areas and remote regions are divided into two phases, with the first four years as junior primary school and the latter two years as senior primary school, so that those who cannot finish the six-year primary school can choose to study for only four years. Middle schools consists of senior and junior middle schools, each lasting three years. Due to lack of teachers, school buildings and other facilities, the middle schools in many areas still follow the five-year system, that is, three years of junior middle school and two years of senior middle school. Secondary vocational and technical education is relatively complicated. It consists mainly of specialized schools (including technical schools and normal schools); vocational schools (including secondary vocational schools, agricultural schools, agrotechnical schools and schools for finance, accounting, commerce, public health and arts).

Higher education includes universities (comprehensive universities, polytechnics, universities for a particular discipline, and colleges); special schools; post-graduate schools (post-graduates mostly study in research institutes and those affliated to universities); as well as TV colleges; correspondence colleges; spare-time colleges; night colleges; and workers' colleges. These institutions of higher learning differ from one another in their length of schooling. Most of the universities and colleges are four years and only a few of them are five years or longer. Specialized schools are generally two to three years, and post-graduate schools provide programmes of two to four years.

Education for adults, which includes a good variety of schools, consists of spare-time education and schools for workers and government employees who engage in full-time studies with pay. Special-purpose education refers to schools for children or adults who are blind, deaf and mute or suffer other handicaps. Schooling for the blind lasts eight years to enable them receive a junior middle school education. The deaf-mutes study eight or nine years to get a primary school education. Extra-curricular education for school children is

an important supplement to the school system and consists of general and specialized education. The former refers to children's palaces and centres, and the latter refers to children's science centres, libraries and spare-time sports schools.

Despite the improvements made in the school system, it still falls short of the requirements of China's political, economic and cultural development and social life, and needs to be further reformed. The government at various levels and experts in the science of education as well as those working in the various schools are studying, both in theory and in practice, and finding ways to solve this question.

Administration of education

China is a unified socialist country and its educational undertakings are run and have developed under the leadership of the government. The Constitution stipulates:

> The State Council, that is, the Central People's government of the People's Republic of China is the executive body of the highest organ of state power; it is the highest organ of state administration. (Article 85).

Under the State Council, there are: (a) the people's governments of the various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions; and (b) the people's governments of the various counties, cities and districts as well as those of the towns and townships of the various nationalities.

Between the provincial and country governments there are administrative organs representing the province. Although they do not constitute a level of government, they perform their power and functions on behalf of the provincial people's government in places under their jurisdiction. Under the State Council there is the Ministry of Education, and the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions have their education bureaux; some with a bureau for higher education. The administrative organs representing the provinces and the counties and cities have education bureaux, some have cultural and educational bureaux of committees and offices. Education offices are also set up in the towns and townships. Some provinces and municipalities administer education for adults.

As outlined in its 1982 Report on the Major Tasks and Functions of the Ministry of Education, the ministry:

1. Formulates concrete policies, rules and important regulations for educational work in accordance with the policies, principles and laws, decrees and resolutions adopted by the Party Central Committee, National People's Congress and State Council;

2. Readjusts and develops educational undertakings, reforming the system of education in connection with the reform of the labour system, personnel system and wage system, gradually establishing an education system compatible with the country's economic construction, social development and the actual conditions of China;

3. Draws up a plan for the development of educational undertakings throughout the country, including plans for public utilities and facilities, financial affairs, investment in capital construction and wages;

4. Provides leadership for and checks up on the political and ideological work, teaching, productive labour, sports and sanitation work in the schools; provides leadership and organizes work for scientific research in institutions of higher learning; compiles the basic teaching materials, and sponsors exchanges of experiences gained in educational work;

5. Provides leadership for expanding and improving the ranks of teachers and staff in the schools; gives guidance to the training of administrative personnel at various levels; and supervises the work of the leading members of institutions of higher learning under the Ministry of Education;

6. Provides leadership for foreign affairs work related to education and handles the work of sending students abroad for further studies and of receiving foreign students;

7. Takes care of the day-to-day work of the State Council's Academic Degrees Committee and the China National Unesco committee on behalf of the State Council;

8. Mobilizes the people to popularize *Putonghua* (common speech or standard spoken Chinese);

9. Co-ordinates the relations between the central authorities and the localities with regard to education; and

10. Fulfils tasks handed down by the Party Central Committee and the State Council.

The major tasks, functions and responsibilities of the education departments under the local governments at various levels; provincial, municipal and autonomous regional levels, are similar to those of the Ministry of Education. The only difference is in their content.

Local education administrative departments are responsible to both the local governments at their own level and to the education administrative departments at a higher level, and they ask for instructions when necessary and report to them on their own work.

Primary education

All kinds of educational undertakings, including primary schools, are led and administered according to the above-mentioned administrative system. Under the education administrative departments at various levels, there are special organizations for administering primary education. Under the Ministry of Education, there is the department of general education; under the provincial, municipal and autonomous regional education departments, there are sections in charge of general education; and under the prefectural and county education bureaux, there are offices in charge of general education. As for the education administrative departments and their staff at the country and township (commune) levels, their major task is to provide leadership for middle school, and especially primary school education. The establishment, distribution and development of primary schools is mainly planned and run by the townships and towns (communes) under the unified leadership of the education departments at the county level.

Inspection of schools. At present, there are no unified regulations regarding the formation of inspecting organs and their organizational patterns. The inspecting work can be roughly divided into four categories: (1) establishment of independent and specialized inspecting departments; (2) appointment of full-time or part-time inspectors within these departments; (3) dividing large rural administrative regions into several inspecting areas and appointing 'resident inspectors'; or (4) allowing education administrative personnel to shoulder the inspecting duties without setting up specialized inspecting organizations or appointing specialized inspectors.

China's educational inspecting work is either periodic or frequent. Periodic inspection takes place at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of each term. Frequent inspection allows inspectors to keep in frequent touch with the schools in their areas and give guidance whenever needed. The inspection may be comprehensive or on special subjects and may involve the inspection of an area as a whole or inspection of a few key schools. Generally speaking, inspection by personnel from the central, provincial and prefectural levels, is mostly of key schools and on special subjects.

Inspectors: (1) collect and master materials first-hand, and use them as the foundation on which plans are drawn up, guidance is given and policies are made; (2) discover and solve problems in good time, and ensure the implementation of state principles, policies and decrees: (3) give concrete guidance to the work in schools in the light of available conditions, raise the work efficiency of schools and improve the quality of teaching.

Teacher training. Elementary education is not universal, but because of the size of the population the number of primary schools and the number of pupils enrolled in them rank first in the world. There were 5.5 million primary school teachers in the country in 1982, accounting for 40 per cent of the total number of teachers. There were almost 140 million pupils attending the nation's primary schools in 1982. This means that there is one teacher for every 25 pupils on the average. While this would seem satisfactory, the fact is that because of uneven development some localities have too many teachers while others are short of teachers. To counter this situation, the departments in charge of education in the various regions have made appropriate adjustments.

Elementary education has made rapid progress, and the ranks of primary school teachers have expanded accordingly. In 1944, there were only 836,000 primary school teachers but the figure had gone up nearly eightfold by 1982. The majority of today's primary school teachers have been trained after the founding of New China having graduated from secondary normal schools or junior and senior middle schools. In some culturally backward areas, there are also some primary school graduates teaching in primary schools. Although normal schools trained 3.128 million graduates from 1949 to 1982 and all were assigned to teach in the primary schools, the figure fell short of the actual needs by 1.3 million. Many taught for only a

short time in primary schools or not al all; others did non-teaching work at schools, or were not assigned work; and some took up further study or were transferred.

It is estimated that about 50 per cent of incumbent primary teachers are graduates of normal schools and most of the remainder are senior and junior middle school graduates. The number of primary school teachers can, on the whole, meet the requirements in the country but in some mountain areas and in the remote and backward regions, there is generally a shortage of teachers. Therefore, to train and provide teachers for these areas is still a problem that merits attention.

Young teachers make up a large proportion of the primary school teaching force. Most of them studied at secondary normal schools, senior or junior middle schools during the 'cultural revolution' (1966-1976). Nominally, they were graduates of these schools, but in fact they were not up to the level of graduates. Some 3 million are teachers in schools run by the collective.[1] Most of them are educated youths who have returned from the cities to their home villages. They have a heavy family burden and have little time to study. Therefore, generally speaking, their cultural level is rather low. To develop elementary education and raise the educational level it will be necessary to find a quick solution to the problem of the low educational standard of China's primary school teachers. Hence the extreme importance of teacher training.

Secondary normal school education to train qualified teachers for primary schools is being strengthened. Training programmes are being set up for incumbent teachers. The latter method is more important at present, and a fairly comprehensive system of in-service training is taking shape. Educational institutions have been set up in the various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions; teachers' institutes for remedial and advanced studies have been set up in the prefectures; teachers' schools for in-service training have been established at the country (district) levels; and the townships

[1] Collectively-run schools refer to schools run by the townships (communes) or production brigades with funds raised by themselves. As the agricultural economy in China's rural areas mainly takes the form of collective ownership, the schools run by these production units are also called 'collectively-run schools' or 'schools run by the local people'. The state gives subsidies to these schools, so these schools are usually referred to as 'schools run by the local people and subsidized by the state'.

(communes) have training or tutorial centres. Teachers either leave their jobs temporarily (with pay) for further studies or else they study in their spare-time. In the former case, the period is usually one year or six months.

According to the 1982 statistics, there were 2,174 teacher's institutes or schools for advanced studies, averaging almost one for each of the nation's 2,190 counties. There were 1,190,300 primary school teachers studying at teachers' institutes; 77,400 were in schools run by the administrative offices at the prefectural level and 1,112,900 at teachers' schools at the county level. Of these, 83,000 left their post for further studies and the rest studied in their spare time.

Part-time study mostly takes the form of correspondence courses, but broadcasting and TV courses are also adopted. Teachers who have taken refresher courses account for one-fourth of the total primary school teachers in the country. Primary school teachers are urged to further their studies and 'give first place to spare-time education, to self-study and to studying while teaching in the schools'. Facts have proved that this is a practical principle.

Teachers also participate in teaching and research groups. Large schools have sub-groups each devoted to a special subject while very small schools with only one or two teachers can join the teaching and research groups organized by several schools in the surrounding areas. One or two people can be appointed to lead the group according to its size. Central groups are organized by, and composed of professionally more competent and qualified personnel who can give guidance to other teaching and research groups in the locality. Training or tutorial centres at the township and town (commune) level are responsible for working out plans and giving guidance to the teachers who want to take comparatively advanced courses in their areas. The activities of the teachers and research groups are carried out at regular intervals, and members of the groups gather together once every two weeks or once a month for discussion questions that have cropped up in the course of teaching or self-study. They tackle problems in teaching, exchange the experiences they have gained and help one another. In addition, short-term training classes are run during the vacations to train teachers in rotation. The training of primary school teachers has the nature of adult education. The content is determined in accordance with the actual conditions and

needs in work. The principle is to combine theory with practice and 'learn what is needed'.

Through various forms of training, the quality of China's primary school teachers is improving year by year but it will take some time for all the teachers to become fully qualified. Even then, there will still be the question of further improvement.

Teaching materials. Teaching materials are compiled and edited by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the teaching programmes for various subjects. Under the ministry, the People's Education Publishing House is charged with the special task of editing and publishing unified teaching materials for the whole nation. This publishing house has the staff to edit and produce teaching materials for different subjects, such as Chinese, mathematics, natural science, politics and so forth. The materials are examined and approved by the Ministry of Education. Because of the volume (20 million copies of textbooks for each subject in each grade of the primary schools) and to ensure the quick distribution of these books, the printing house of the People's Education House prepares the paper moulds which are sent to the various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions for printing. The Xinhua Book Store which has branches all over the country, is responsible for the unified distribution of these textbooks. Under normal conditions, the teaching materials can reach the hands of the pupils before a new school year starts. The pupils have to pay for the teaching materials, but the price of the textbooks is very low. The first volume of the textbooks for Chinese and mathematics for primary school pupils in 1982 for example cost only 0.24 and 0.29 yuan[1] respectively, just the cost of two eggs. All the parents can afford it.

The teacher's reference books are also edited and published by the People's Education Publishing House. However, in the light of local conditions, various localities also edit and publish more specific and detailed reference books.

The use of the same textbooks throughout the country will help ensure the maintenance of standards. This is conducive to the attainment of the goals in teaching, the implementation of our educational principles and the fulfilment of basic demands. The

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[1] Approximately 2 Chinese yuan (¥) = One United States dollar

problem of meeting specific situations and different requirements in different parts of the country is being studied so as to find a solution.

Financing primary education

Most urban schools are run by the state, mostly by the state's educational departments, and some by the various undertakings and enterprises themselves. For instance, the railway departments have a complete education system of their own, embracing universities down to the primary schools. Rural schools are mostly run by the collective in addition to some which are operated by the state's educational departments. There are also a small number of schools financed by individuals or overseas Chinese. All types of schools follow a unified educational policy and have the same training objectives, teaching plans, curricula and teaching materials. The major difference lies in the source of funds in addition to the assigning and transferring of personnel.

Funds for schools run by the state's educational departments are mainly government financial appropriations and special financial allocations from the local government at all levels. Funds for schools run by the various undertakings and enterprises are mainly borne by the units themselves. Those run by the collective are financed by the communes and production brigades, with a certain amount of subsidy from the Ministry of Education. In addition, the funds needed for running the schools come from the students' tuition and other fees and part of the profits derived from the schools' productive labour. The amount of tuition and other fees paid by the students is very small and varies from place to place, ranging from 0.5 to 2.5 yuan per person for a semester. Some collectively run schools do not charge tuition or other fees, and in schools which do charge, those students having financial difficulties do not pay at all. Profits derived from the schools' productive labour differ vastly. Some get only a small amount of money, others a pretty large amount. Whatever the amount of profits so obtained, the money is at the school's disposal and no tax is levied by the government. Tuition and other fees are also at the school's disposal; they are not included in the state budget and so need not be handed over to the higher authorities.

For various reasons appropriations for education in the past were generally quite limited. During the 1949-1979 period, the pro-

portion of education funds in the national economy was 1.19 per cent of the total industrial and agricultural output value, 1.98 per cent of the national income and 5.74 per cent of the nation's total expenditure. In the 1976-1981 period, state revenue increased only 29.3 per cent, an average annual rise of 5.3 per cent; but in the same period, educational funds went up by 102.7 per cent, an average annual increase of 15.2 per cent. The proportion of educational funds in the total state expenditure also increased year by year. While it accounted for only 6 per cent in 1979, the amount rose to 7.5 per cent in 1980 and 10.2 per cent in 1981. Despite this upward trend in the allocation of educational funds, it still falls far short of the needs of developing education. With due consideration for its financial difficulties at present, China advocates running schools industriously and thriftily. Of course, this is not merely intended to make up for the lack of funds, it is in itself of educational significance.

Funds for universalizing primary education. At present, there are several views regarding funds for achieving universal primary education. One view is that the state should bear all the expenses for primary school education and all collectively run schools should be changed into schools operated by the state. Those holding this view say that the government only has to earmark an additional sum of several thousand million yuan a year and the problem of funds is solved. They maintain that this is the only way to ensure enough funds for realizing universal primary education in the 1980s. Another view is that all rural primary schools should be changed into collectively run schools financed by the peasants themselves, with a certain amount of subsidy from the state. These people say that with the adoption of the system of responsibility in production linking remuneration with output, the peasants have become well-off. Since they urgently wish to acquire scientific and cultural knowledge, they would be willing to contribute a certain amount of money for education. In this way, primary education could be developed at a quicker pace and universal elementary education could be accomplished at an early date. The third view holds that it is advisable to follow the current method of 'walking on two legs', that is, the funds needed to popularize elementary education should be contributed by the state, the local authorities and the people. The combined sum total would be considerable. Those who hold this view say that this method is more realistic and is in conformity with China's present conditions; moreover, it has proved effective in practice over

the years. Which opinion is more rational is now being discussed and studied. At present, the original method is still being followed, but the funds for education are increasing slightly every year.

Of the state allocations for education, funds, for institutions of higher learning are larger than funds for middle schools, while the primary schools get the smallest amount. The state allocation for primary schools in 1978 was only 27.02 per cent (not including subsidies for collectively run schools), the remaining funds were mainly for the universities, colleges and middle schools. This is quite different from the situation in many other countries. Some people consider this to be unreasonable, but such practice is only natural in view of the actual conditions. Because China must import and use the developed countries' advanced technology and equipment to develop its economy and accomplish modernization quickly, personnel must be trained quickly who can use the advanced technology and equipment. It would be ideal to train them right from the primary schools, but to do so requires a long period of time. It thus becomes an urgent task to successfully run and promote higher education and give it due priority. It is under these circumstances that the state allocates a larger portion of its limited educational funds to higher education and to secondary school education which directly provides the institutions of higher learning with qualified students. This situation will gradually change as the economy develops, but it will require a relatively long time.

School buildings. Because of the lack of educational funds, primary school buildings are not as good as desired. According to the 1982 statistics, primary school buildings totalled 317.53 million square metres, averaging about 371 square metres per school or 2.3 square metres per pupil. This is far below the targets set in the planned floor space quotas.

As a result of the 'cultural revolution' many school buildings have been occupied by other units for years. Although some have been returned in recent years, others are still being occupied. Furthermore, about 9 per cent of the primary school buildings are in a precarious state because they have long been in disrepair. The government has noted this and has allocated the necessary funds but about half of them still urgently need repair.

Chapter Two

STATE POLICY FOR MAKING ELEMENTARY EDUCATION UNIVERSAL

The strategic task for the whole nation has become one of safeguarding the socialist system and pressing ahead with socialist construction. To fulfil this task, it is imperiative to quickly accomplish the modernization of industry, agriculture, national defence and other fields of endeavour. To achieve modernization, the people must be armed with cultural knowledge, science and technological skills; the intellectual development of the workers, peasants and cadres promoted, the ranks of the intellectuals expanded and experts trained in every field.

Primary education is the foundation of the entire educational undertaking and at the same time the starting point for raising the nation's level of cultural knowledge and science and technology. Therefore, after the founding of New China, the Party and the state have all along set great store by primary school education, which is the mainstay of elementary education.

In 1978, the Ministry of Education issued a Trial Plan for Running Well Some Key Middle and Primary Schools. The plan made clear stipulations on the purpose, task, scale, enrolment and leadership in running these key middle and primary schools efficiently. In 1980, the Party Central Committee and the State Council jointly promulgated the Resolution on Certain Questions Concerning the Popularization of Primary School Education and pointed out that the stress should be on flexibility. Recently it was pointed out that as conditions in China's countryside vary, rural education must proceed from the actual local conditions and adopt measures suited to the characteristics of labour and life of the people in the rural areas, the different demands of different places and nationalities, the financial and material conditions, and the level of economic development and the cultural and education foundation of the localities. Therefore, the schools should be at multiple levels and in various sizes and structures. Some full-time primary schools should offer

courses according to the syllabi laid down by the Ministry of Education. Primary schools offering only such subjects as Chinese, arithmetic, general knowledge, and ideological and ethical education should also be set up. At the same time, various forms of simply equipped primary schools or teaching classes (groups) should also be set up, in which only the Chinese language and arithmetic were taught, including half-day, every-other-day and mobile schools. In sparsely-populated areas inhabited by minority people and in mountainous, forest and pastoral areas, it was necessary to set up some boarding schools, in addition to increasing the teaching centres.

These facts show that China has for more than 30 years persisted in developing primary education through setting up various forms of schools.

Special purpose schools

Full-time primary schools. The overwhelming majority of the population live in big and medium-sized cities and in the counties and towns on the middle and lower reaches of the Huanghe (Yellow) and Changjiang (Yangtze) River, in the basins of the Liaohe, Songhua, Zhujiang (pearl) and Huai Rivers, as well as on the plains along the coast. These areas have a favourable climate, fertile soil, rich resources and good communications facilities. With the population concentrated in the cities, these areas are politically economically and culturally developed. Prior to the 1960s, the cities, industrial and mining areas, rural towns and some developed agricultural areas devoted their major efforts to running six-year full-time primary schools, while in the vast countryside, the primary schools mainly followed a four-year system. In the 1960s, primary schools in both the cities and the countryside gradually shifted to a five-year system, and today, the five-year and six-year primary schools exist side by side. These have become the major forms in popularizing primary school education in China.

Two-shift primary schools. With the steady development of industrial and agricultural production, the cities have thrived as never before. The number of children attending schools has increased considerably, and the question of the shortage of school buildings and teaching facilities has become more and more acute. In order to

solve this contradiction, a two-shift system has been adopted for some urban primary schools. Pupils of each grade are divided into two or several classes and they attend school separately, half in the morning and the other half in the afternoon, thereby solving the question of shortage of school buildings and teaching facilities. On the basis of the experience gained in running these two-shift primary schools in various places, the Ministry of Education issued directives requesting that the curricula and teaching plans for the two-shift schools should differ from those for full-time schools, but the teaching time for the major subjects in two-shift schools must be guaranteed, and the teaching of drawing, music and physical training for the lower and intermediate grades in the primary schools must also be ensured.

The two documents also required that the two-shift primary schools pay special attention to giving guidance to the pupils' extra-curricular activities and assign instructors to help them in this respect. These instructors should be on the payroll as regular members of the school staff. In recent years, as marked progress has been achieved in family planning in the cities, the number of school-age children has begun to decrease. And as school buildings have either been expanded or built in large numbers, the number of two-shift schools has also decreased. For instance, in 1964, there were 7,233 two-shift primary schools in the cities throughout the country, accounting for 35.5 per cent of the total with 104,204 two-shift classes, accounting for 39.4 per cent of the total number of classes in urban primary schools. The number of pupils enrolled in two-shift primary schools and classes was 5.072 million, accounting for 40.9 per cent of the total number of urban primary school pupils. By 1981, however, according to incomplete statistics, the number of two-shift schools in the cities had dropped to 1,541, or only 8.4 per cent of the total number of urban primary schools; and the number of two-shift classes had decreased to 19,863; 8.3 per cent of the total number of classes in urban primary schools.

"Package schools". In the hilly areas in northwest, southwest and central-south China and other parts of the country, the population density is small and the people often live far apart. Usually, there are not many households and children in a village, so it is impossible for each village to run various types of schools with all the grades. Starting from the 1950s, "package schools" were set up in

these areas. Primary school pupils and primary school graduates who cannot continue their studies in middle schools in the cities and towns are all enrolled in the same school and are taught in different classes. These schools, which are to the liking of the people in the various localities, have become an effective means for popularizing primary school education and have been improved, perfected and developed in some places.

Taojiang County in Hunan Province, for example, popularized primary education through this method by the end of the 1970s. Supported and subsidized by the state and relying on the strength of the collective, the various production brigades in this county have put up new and up-to-standard school buildings, complete with teaching, sports and public health facilities, including classrooms for primary school pupils, classrooms for children under six and classrooms for spare-time education for adults as well as a fairly big auditorium. The auditorium serves many purposes. Apart from being used for holding school meetings and for holding sports meets on windy or rainy days, it is used by the brigade members for holding meetings or for showing films and organizing other recreational activities as well as village get-togethers. In fact, such schools have become educational and cultural centres of the production brigades.

Now, Taojiang County has popularized pre-school education. The method it employs is for every production brigade to buy a harmonium, some desks and stools and toys. (Some well-off brigades have even made colourful school uniforms for the children to wear on festive occasions.) Then, one or two teachers are selected from among the educated young girls in the brigade and sent to short-term pre-school teacher training centres run by the county. All children from four to six years old are taken to school by their elder brothers or sisters, and the teachers teach them to sing, dance, do handwork and play games. They also teach the children Chinese phonetic symbols and simple addition and subtraction. As the hours spent in the schools are lively and colourful, the children are willing to go there rather than stay alone at home. Through summing up its experience, Taojiang County has found that setting up pre-school classes in the primary schools has four distinct advantages: (1) this method is beneficial to production – since pre-school children must be looked after by adults, a number of women are inevitably prevented from taking part in productive labour if their children have to

stay at home. Now with special classes for pre-school children in the primary schools, these women need not stay at home to look after their children but can take part in productive labour; (2) it is beneficial to the commune members' well-being. Women prevented from taking part in productive labour because of their children, will not be able to get any earnings from the collective. Some peasants who are hard up and have to take part in labour in order to earn some money must therefore lock their children up at home or let them play outside by themselves. By sending their children to the pre-school classes and putting them under the care of the teachers, the parents do not have to worry and can take part in productive labour and so increase their family incomes; (3) this method is conducive to popularizing primary school education. In China's countryside, there is the habit of letting school-age girls look after their younger brothers or sisters on behalf of their parents. This inevitably prevents the school-age girls from attending school. The opening of pre-school classes for children like those in Taojiang County has solved this problem and enabled the girls to go to school; and (4) the pre-school children through this method will get used to life in the schools and learn Chinese phonetic symbols and addition and subtraction. This is a help when they enter the primary schools. Therefore, schools with pre-school classes for children in Taojiang County are called 'four satisfaction' schools, because they give satisfaction to the children, the production team leaders, the children's parents and the primary school teachers.

In December 1979, the Ministry of Education called a meeting in Taojiang County, participated by heads of education departments from various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions, to publicize the experience of Taojiang County. Now, similar schools have also been set up in other places.

Multi-grade classes. In the early days after the founding of New China, the rate of school-age children attending schools in the vast countryside, especially in the remote mountain areas, was for various reasons very low. Even in primary schools of big, densely populated villages, the number of students was far short of the required enrolment for the various grades. Hence, the opening of multi-grade classes, where the pupils of two or three grades in one class were taught separately by one teacher in one classroom. The teaching programme for full-time schools is not applied to such

classes, where only such major subjects as the Chinese language and arithmetic are taught, the subjects and the content of the textbooks are simplified and class hours lengthened. At present, full-time primary schools with multi-grade classes are still run in the mountain areas in the north, northwest and central China as well as in other parts of the country. They have also become a major factor in popularizing primary school education.

Mobile primary schools. China has a fairly large area of pastoral, mountainous and forest land as well as large areas crisscrossed by rivers and streams. Usually, these places are sparsely populated. The people live far apart, and few households make up a village or a settlement. Some families even live in the mountains and ravines all by themselves. All this poses problems for popularizing primary school education. As the villages and households are far apart, the children cannot go to study in the schools. Teachers go the rounds of the villages or settlements to teach, sometimes being responsible for several villages. They bring a chalkboard, chalks and textbooks, travelling from one teaching point to another in the villages, where the children are assembled for the classes. Some are taught a new lesson, some are given assignments and some have their homework examined, just as them as in the multi-grade classes. This constitutes the mobile primary schools. Of course, for these teachers the work is strenuous and demands patience and great effort, since they have to trudge long distances every day in the mountainous and forested areas, taking rations with them. In areas crisscrossed by rivers, they make the rounds of villages by boat, and on the grassland, they travel on horseback to the herdsmen's tents, hence the name 'horseback primary schools'. This kind of teaching can only be carried out for half a day or every other day; the teaching plans and content must therefore be simplified to fit such a system.

Simply equipped primary schools. To meet the different needs of the people of various places in their production and life, full-time primary schools have been established in the vast countryside and the peasants encouraged to run simply equipped primary schools by themselves, so as to satisfy the peasants' strong desire to send their children to school and accelerate the pace of achieving universal primary education. These primary schools orient their teaching to the people's needs. They arrange their teaching programme and holidays in a flexible way so that the pupils will, during

their years at school or after graduation, be able to adapt themselves to the needs of agricultural production and life in the countryside. From their inception, these schools generally use whatever school buildings, equipment and teachers are available, For instance, they have classes in the local ancestral halls, temples, warehouses or large houses, and the students are required to bring their own desks and chairs. The teachers are from their own localities who, under the guidance and supervision of the government educational administrative departments, teach the children Chinese and arithmetic. The students study half a day and work in the fields also half a day; the primary school pupils doing auxiliary work only. In 1965, the number of such primary schools in the countryside was 842,000 attended by almost 25 million pupils in 1 million classes.

During the 'cultural revolution', these primary schools were converted into five-year regular primary schools. In recent years however, in order to enroll as many peasants' children as possible, the local authorities have restored various types of simply equipped primary schools and used diverse forms to run them. For example, the simply equipped primary schools restored in Fangcheng Country, Henan Province, have dropped from being full-time primary schools for various reasons, their aim being to prevent the emergence of new illiteracy. A new situation has emerged in the countryside after the adoption of the system of responsibility in production. To meet the needs of this situation, Laian County in Anhui Province in 1980 ran a number of 'slack farming season' primary schools whose task was to enroll school-age children, from seven to 15 years old, who could not go to full-time schools because of financial difficulties. In these schools, the two terms of a school year were divided into three phases: The first phase began on 1 October and ended on 25 December of the lunar year; the second phase was from 10 January to 15 March; and the third phase lasted for one month (1-30 July) which was a period for reviewing the lessons learnt. During this time the students studied five hours a day and had one holiday a month. For the whole school year, they studied 180 days with a total of 720 school hours of lessons. After five years' study, the students basically reached the level of primary school graduation. These schools mainly taught Chinese and arithmetic. On holidays and after school every day, the students were organized to take part in auxiliary labour.

Yangyuan County in Hebei Province realized universal primary school education in the 1960s. Their main experience was to arrange teaching according to the requirements of different farming seasons in a year. During the busiest farming season, the schools suspended classes so that the students could help with the farm work; during the busy farming season, the students went to school earlier than usual and attended a whole day's classes in the morning so that they could take part in farm work in the afternoon; during the less busy farming season, some students could ask for leave to do farm work for one half day or a full day in a week and the teachers would help them make up for the lessons they missed in the morning, at noon or in the evening; during the slack farming season, the students studied at school all day long.

Full-time boarding schools and tent schools on the grassland. China has vast grasslands where the Mongolian, Tibetan, Kazak, Tajik, Yuku and other minority nationalities engage in livestock breeding. Even today, most herdsmen lead a nomatic life and move from place to place in different seasons, without any fixed settlements. In order to speed the quality of teaching, the state allotted special funds for developing education and setting up schools at selected spots on the grasslands. The herdsmen's children could study in these schools with their expenses on food, clothing, lodging and tuition all paid by the government. The students could live and study in the schools, but since the herdsmen led a hard life and were short of labour force, some of them would rather keep their children at home than send them to the boarding schools dozens and sometimes hundreds of kilometres away. The children too, did not want to leave their parents. In view of this, the state set up tent primary schools. Teachers are provided with a large tent and two horses so that they can move from place to place with the herdsmen and teach their children.

Controlled population growth

Runaway population growth has brought immense pressure on the popularization of primary school education. It is estimated that the number of people born after liberation accounted for 63 per cent of the nation's total population today. At the beginning of the 1970s, the annual enrolment of primary school pupils exceeded 30 million. At present, the number of primary school pupils has topped

140 million. At the end of the 1950s, the state took note of the problem and immediately set out to control population growth. The state advocates family planning and stresses that, except for special cases which are granted approval, married state functionaries and workers should have only one child. This principle was also advocated in the countryside. For those who really have difficulties and wish two children, arrangements may be made with approval from the government quarters concerned. But under no circumstances are third births allowed. Family planning is also encouraged among the minority nationalities, but more lenient measures are taken towards them.

The present aim is to keep the annual natural population growth rate under 13 per thousand which means the total population of the 29 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions must be kept at around 1.06 billion by 1985. Especially since the 1970s, remarkable results have been achieved in the work of family planning. The natural growth rate of population fell from 26 per thousand in 1970 to below 12 per thousand in 1980. In those 10 years, an accumulative total of 60 million fewer people were born. This figure is equal to the population of a medium sized country. Besides enforcing strict family planning and a system of examination and approval, China also adopts other concrete measures to control population growth. In the cities, for instance, preferential treatment and awards are given to one-child families. Women workers all have 56 days of maternity leave, but now one-child mothers enjoy six months of maternity leave with full pay. One-child families can receive 5 yuan worth of monthly nutrient subsidy drawn from the welfare funds of the workers and staff members. In some cities, one-child families are given priority in the supply of goods in great demand.

In addition, in view of the fact that some people, affected by the old ideology that men are superior to women, violate family planning in order to rear male children, the state adopts resolute measures to protect girl babies and their mothers. To counter the outdated idea of 'rearing sons in order to have someone to rely on in one's old age', the government calls upon the whole society to actively run various forms of undertakings to support the old and help those old people who have lost their working ability and have no one to rely on. All these measures effectively guarantee the smooth implementation of China's family planning.

Educational policy

In popularizing primary education, the government adheres to the principles that (1) men and women enjoy equal rights in education; (2) all nationalities in the country enjoy equal rights in education; and (3) religion must not interfere with education.

China was for a long time under the feudal system and the phenomenon of regarding men as superior to women was the norm, which was also manifested in culture and education. Even after the 1911 Revolution, because the political, economic and social status of men and women was still unequal and the influence of feudal ideology had not been eradicated, most girls were still denied the chance to go to school. After the founding of New China, efforts were made to do away with this irrational phenomenon. To accomplish this, equality between men and women is guaranteed by state legislation and policy.

Since 1954 the Constitution has stipulated that women enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and domestic life. The state protects marriage, the family and the mother and child.

Due to the deep-rooted feudal legal concept that women had no right to inherit property in old China, many parents in the rural areas do not wish to spend money on the education of their daughters and do not send them to school, because they grow up, are invariably married off and will not be counted as members of their families. After agricultural co-operatives were set up, the situation has improved somewhat. However, because the women are required to participate in collective productive labour to increase family income, girls are often charged with the task of doing household chores. This virtually amounts to depriving them of their rights to education.

In the 1970s, almost all urban girls attended schools. In the countryside, through repeated publicity and mobilization by the educational administrative departments and schools, most parents also sent their children to school. However when any auxiliary labour was needed the parents invariably ordered the girls to quit school. As a result, large numbers of girl students could not continue their studies. The problem still exists and the state is working on a law on primary school education to ensure the retention of girls.

China is a multi-national country with more than 50 nationalities. In 1956, moves were made to help those minority nationalities which did not have a written language, to create their own language. The Minority Nationalities Spoken and Written Languages Research Institute under the Chinese Academy of Sciences began to work out tentative languages for minority nationalities and popularized them on a trial basis. In 1974, the State Council instructed that all localities and departments should take effective measures to solve the problems arising from the work of popularizing education in the border and minority nationality areas and strive to accomplish the task of popularizing five-year primary school education in the rural areas at an early date.

In the early 1950s, the state appropriated a sum of money for the development of education among the minority nationalities, and this is still the case at present. In February 1981, the Ministry of Education and the State Nationality Commission convened a Nationality Educational Working Conference which decided to strengthen normal education for the minority nationalities, actively train teachers from among the minority peoples in the various localities, continue to mobilize and organize teachers in the inland provinces to teach in minority nationality areas. Active efforts are being made to solve the shortage of teachers in the minority nationality areas in accordance with this decision. In addition, in the past 30 years and more, the state has worked out separate written language schemes for the Zhuang, Yi, Dai, and other nationalities, popularized it on an experimental basis and put it into use in the localities concerned. Written language reform schemes have also been worked out for the Uygur, Kazak and other minority nationalities and popularized on a trial bais. Tibet, Xinjiang Inner Mongolia, Qinghai and Jilin (mainly in Yanbian) have set up their own nationality education publishing houses which compile, translate and publish textbooks in the languages of the minority peoples. Chinese language teaching materials as well as reference books for teaching have also been published. All this ensures that the minority peoples will use and develop their own languages.

In short, the cultural and educational undertakings in China's minority nationality areas have undergone tremendous changes. For instance, in Tibet, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan where Tibetans live, there was not even a single school before liberation.

But now a complete educational system has been set up, from kindergartens up to universities and colleges. Inner Mongolia, Yinjiang, Gansu Guangxi and Ningxia have caught up with or approached the inland provinces in popularizing primary school education. The Korean nationality which has the fine traditions of attaching great importance to education has the highest level of education among China's various minority nationalities. The rate of school-age children attending school in 1944 just before liberation was only about 50 per cent in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in northeast China. The figure reached 92 per cent in 1951 and universal primary education was realized in 1952. Now efforts are being exerted to make secondary education universal.

The freedom of religious belief is one of the fundamental rights of China's citizens. Explicit stipulations have been laid down in the Common Programme and the Constitution adopted by the National People's Congress on several occasions. As China is a socialist country upholding the materialist world outlook, it must correctly handle the relationship between religion and education.

The government has instructed that the teaching of religious doctrine should not be taught at school. No restrictions should be imposed on the students who attend services or learn creeds after school. The Constitution adopted in 1975 and 1978 stipulated: 'Citizens enjoy freedom to believe in religion, and freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism'.

Regulations for full-time schools and reforming the school system. The period of study in full-time schools during the 1950s was usually five years and children entered school at the age of seven.

To divide full-time primary school education into four years for the lower grades and two years for the higher grades, as was done just after liberation, was quite compatible with China's actual conditions. Especially in the cities, children enter the primary schools at the age of seven and study for six years, first in the primary schools and another six years in the middle schools. When the students graduate, they are 18 years old, which is the right age for going to work. If the length of schooling for primary schools is changed to five years, and the length of schooling for middle schools to four or five years, then students will graduate from the middle schools at the age of 15 or 16, which means they are still not grown-ups. They can

do auxiliary labour in the rural areas, but they can hardly find work in the cities. The reasons: first, China is a socialist country, and factories and enterprises usually do not employ child labourers; second, since the beginning of the 1960s, the problem of employment has cropped up for young people under 18 years old. If the length of schooling for primary and secondary school education is shortened, it virtually amounts to artificially expanding the contingents of jobless educated youth and increasing the burden on society; and third, to lengthen the period of schooling gives the students the opportunity to absorb more basic knowledge and thus raises the scientific and cultural level of the young people making up the social labour force, enhances the quality of work and helps expedite the modernization drive.

In view of the fact that there is still a shortage of school buildings, equipment, teachers and teaching materials, it is difficult at present to change all the primary schools into the six-year schooling system. The Resolutions on Some Questions Concerning the Popularization of Primary School Education, issued jointly by the Party Central Committee and the State Council in December 1980, stipulated that preparations are being made to gradually change the length of schooling of primary and middle schools into a 12-year schooling system. The five- and six-year system for primary schools will exist side by side for a period of time in the future. In the cities, primary schools may first follow the six-year educational system. Primary schools in the rural areas may not change for the time being.

Textbook production. Under the impact of the 'cultural revolution', the People's Education Publishing House under the Ministry of Education was closed down in 1968. During this time the textbooks for middle and primary schools were edited, published and supplied by the various provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions themselves and no unified national textbooks were available.

In 1977, the Ministry of Education began organizing forces to compile and edit unified national textbooks of various subjects for the use of primary and middle school students. At the same time, the People's Education Publishing House resumed its work, thus putting the work of editing, publishing and supplying textbooks back on the right track. In 1978, the primary schools throughout the country began using the newly edited teaching materials. In 1980, the editing of national textbooks for the full-time primary schools

adopting the five-year schooling system was completed, and these textbooks were published and supplied by the People's Education Publishing House to all parts of the country. Following this, this publishing house also started editing the teaching materials for primary schools adopting the six-year schooling system. These textbooks have now been published and supplied. In addition to this the People's Education Publishing House is busy editing the teaching materials for music and the fine arts. In 1979, the Ministry of Education issued a circular which said that schools could trial implement the two draft teaching programmes on music and on the fine arts for the full-time primary and middle school. The circular urged the various localities to edit teaching materials for these subjects for their own use and added that national textbooks would be supplied from 1981.

Training primary school teachers. Before the 'cultural revolution', the various localities strictly abided by the policies laid down by the Ministry of Education on the training of teachers, adopted concrete measures to this effect, solved various kinds of problems relating to the quantity and quality of primary school teachers and ensured the normal progress of China's elementary education. The 'cultural revolution', however, interfered and sabotaged the series of regulations governing work in this field. Spare-time training schools and correspondence normal schools for the primary school teachers were all suspended, and in some places the secondary normal schools were also closed down.

In 1977, the Ministry of Education after summing up the views of the representatives at the forum on the training of middle and primary school teachers in Beijing, issued a circular on the ways of strengthening the work of training teachers working at their posts. By 1979, teachers' in-service training networks had been established at the provincial, prefectural, county, commune and school levels throughout the country. A total of 1.375 million primary school teachers had attended the training classes; 47 per cent of the total number of teachers who should take part in these training classes.

In 1978 the State Council said that the educational administrative departments at the county level and above should be in charge of the administration and transference of teachers in the state-run middle and primary schools under the unified leadership of the Party Committee. The natural depletion of teachers in the state-run

schools should be replenished in full by teachers selected by the educational administrative departments from the schools run by the various localities in the same year, and the county educational administrative departments should make an overall plan in selecting such teachers. The appointment, dismissal and transference of teachers from the schools run by the localities should be carried out with the approval of the county educational administrative departments.

In 1979, the Ministries of Education and Finance issued a joint circular which said that, since the selling prices for the major non-staple foods had gone up in the country, the teachers and staff members of the middle and primary schools run by the localities would be subsidized according to the standard of subsidies given to the workers and staff members throughout the country.

A joint circular issued in October 1979 by the Ministries of Education, Finance and Grain, the State Nationalities Affairs Commission and the State General Labour Administration said that all the teachers and staff members of the middle and primary schools run by the localities in the 163 counties and cities in the border areas would from that year be turned into teachers and staff members of state-run schools. The circular also made stipulations with regard to the conditions, ways of examination, salary and the way of counting the years of service of locally run school teachers who would be turned into teachers of the state-run schools.

Regulations made in 1980 stipulated that the task of secondary normal schools was to train primary school teachers, school teachers and child-care workers. The length of schooling was to be either three or four years. The trainees should be recruited from among junior middle school graduates or those youth with the same educational level. The size of the school should not be too large; in principle there should be at least 12 classes but not more than 24 classes, with 40 students in a class. The period of schooling should be no less than nine months in a year. Two weeks should be set aside for productive labour and two and a half months for the winter and summer vacations. These schools should offer such courses as politics, Chinese and the method of teaching Chinese, arithmetic and the method of teaching it in primary schools, physics, chemistry, biology, the method of teaching natural science in primary schools, foreign language, geography, history, psychology, pedagogy, physical culture,

music, the fine arts and practice in teaching. Minority nationality normal schools should in addition offer a course in their own languages.

The basic organizational form of education for secondary normal schools was classroom instruction. The principal of the school was chosen by the educational administrative department of a higher level and appointed by the local government. The principal is in charge of the school's administration. The Party organization in the school had the responsibility for guaranteeing and supervising the administrative work of the school. The students' union should, under the leadership of the Party organization and the administrative department of the school, unite with all the students so as to help them to be good in ideology and ethics, study well and keep fit. The trade union should, under the leadership of the Party organization of the school, assist the administrative department and conscientiously do ideological and political work, the work of unity and welfare among the teachers and staff members of the school.

In 1981 the salaries of the middle and primary school teachers were readjusted upwards. This, combined with the campaign to 'respect the teacher and love the students' has greatly fired the enthusiasm of the primary school teachers and will spur them on to contribute their bit to making China's elementary education universal.

Chapter Three

PROJECT AND PLAN OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

In 1949, it was stressed in the first national conference for educational work that education must serve for the construction of the country; schools should be opened to workers and peasants; and primary education developed.

In the first three years after the founding of the New China, the educational cause went through the period of reformation, rectification and development; achieved certain success and made some progress. The primary school pupils increased by 101 per cent but during this period there was no unified developmental plan for the national educational cause due to lack of experience.

First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957). The first five-year plan began in 1953 and instructed that primary education should have the character of national compulsory education. The number of years set for compulsory education would be extended step by step. Those who could enter a higher school for advanced studies were only a small part. Most of them should be engaged in industrial, agricultural and other productive labour. During the period the number of pupils should be controlled to 50,000,000.

Because of the scale and speed of industrialization, the development of science, culture and education could not be completely carried out according to the original plan. The scale and speed of educational development required suitable enlargement and acceleration. It had fallen behind economical construction and needed to be changed. In the districts where production developed more quickly, the enrolment rate of children reached above 80 per cent. By 1956 the enrolment had reached more than 63,400,000. This created a shortage of teachers, bad quality teaching and crowded school buildings.

Second Five Year Plan and Three Year Readjustment Period (1958-1965). Rapid industrial development and population growth

has continued into the 1980s making planning and the meeting of objectives very difficult. The Party Central Committee and the State Council made a decision in 1980 that primary education should be made universal before 1990 and it must be accomplished in advance in the regions where the economy had been developed and the educational foundation was better. Premier Zhou Enlai pointed out that the country must strive to get rid of illiteracy among the young people and the people in the prime of their lives. This task would be very arduous, formidable and urgent in the national educational front. All regions must actively create conditions to make more school-agers go to school. Enrolment in primary schools is predicted to be 130,000,000 in 1985 and by that date every effort will be made to make middle school education universal.

The present system of management. At present, under the prerequisite for a national unified plan the system of management is carried out at different levels. There is a combination between higher and lower level and integration between all parts in the management of the planned work for education. The policy, task, scale, and speed of implementation will be decided as a whole by the state.

Local plans and departmental plans are administered by the People's Government of every province, municipality and autonomous region and the concerned departments of the State Council. The plan at the basic level is separately supervised by the responsible department of schools.

Chapter Four

ANALYSIS, STUDY AND EXPLANATION OF SOME PROBLEMS

Before liberation the enrolment rate in primary schools was only a little over 15 per cent, but from liberation to the year 1982, it has increased to 93.2 per cent. This achievement should not be separated from the development of the national economy. For various reasons this has been an uneven and undulating rate of growth over the past 30 years. This has resulted in constant readjustment and reorganization. Although universal primary education has not yet been achieved there has been a steady rise in the quality of education.

Can it be said that if the economy is developed and the people's living standard raised, primary education will be popularized automatically without subjective efforts? The answer is negative. Recorded statements of provincial administrators indicate that relatively poor and isolated counties with good leadership and community support have come as near, or nearer to universalized primary education than some prosperous areas that show little concern for primary education and do not support it.

Enrolment is now above 93 per cent, but while only 7 per cent of school-age children are not attending school the rate of new enrolments has gradually decreased. In the first several years, it increased by nearly 10 per cent every year. Both in 1980 and 1981 there was no increase. In 1982 it increased by only 0.2 per cent. This shows that it is becoming more and more difficult to reach the objective of universal primary education. In 1982, enrolment was as follows:

	Urban	Rural
	(Per cent)	
North China	99.06	95.91
Northeast	98.41	95.70
East China	99.76	93.40
Middle South	99.92	94.67
Southwest	98.80	86.39
Northwest	98.58	82.27

The difference between urban and rural enrolment is universal. In four regions the rural enrolment is not only high but it also exceeds the average for the whole country. It is the rural areas of the Southwest and Northwest regions, which are below the national average. In these two large regions, there are comparatively few towns, and smaller population with most of the population being rural. Because their rural enrolment is low, it dragged down the average of the whole country. The 1982 census showed there were about 200,000,000 people living in the cities, towns and counties which made up 20 per cent of the population of the whole country. Schoolage children numbered 15,300,000 of whom about 15,200,000 had entered school. The enrolment was 99.21 per cent. The total rural population was about 800,000,000 making about 80 per cent of the total population. There were about 102,000,000 schoolagers of whom 94,000,000 had entered schools. The enrolment was 92.25 per cent showing that there is a great difference between urban and rural enrolments.

The census also showed that the focal point for universalizing primary education of the country is in the rural areas with the most difficult points being the mountain areas, outlying areas and the areas inhabited by minority nationalities.

In 1957, girls only made up 34.5 per cent of the total pupils of primary schools. By 1978 it reached 44.9 per cent and in 1982, 47 per cent. While there is only a 3 per cent difference in the enrolment rates of boys and girls, because girls take part in auxiliary family labour more often, they are frequently not promoted to the next grade. Because of repeating the year's study continously and becoming older and older, they become more unwilling to go on studying than boys.

In the past few years, there has been a saying 'three, six, nine', meaning enrolment has reached about 90 per cent, the rate of pupils at schools is about 60 per cent but the rate of qualified graduates is only 30 per cent. This is more serious in country schools. Recent statistics indicate that an average only about 50 per cent complete the primary school course. In this aspect, the difference between urban and rural areas appears more obvious. Generally speaking, the urban rate is better, where most of the pupils not only finish study in primary school, but also reach the qualifying standard. It is worse in rural areas where, in a few districts, the rate of qualified pupils

is below 10 per cent. There are many reasons for this but on the whole it reflects the low quality of education. According to the stipulation of our country, a pupil at primary school who fails in either Chinese or mathematics cannot go up to the next grade. Besides the over-age pupils in grade I who were late entering schools, the over-age pupils of other grades increases every year. A decline of the over-age pupils in grade III was because there were many pupils who left school half way. According to the reflection from the investigation, most of the over-age pupils from 12 to 15 years old became worse in class because they studied badly and didn't observe the displine. Most of them had poor marks in study. Their inferiority complex and the teachers' inability to choose suitable educational methods according to their characters caused some of them to become mischievous. According to the 1982 statistics, there were 272,695 million over-age pupils among the 1,397,204 million pupils at school in the whole country, which made up 19.5 per cent. According to the reality of our country, there is both a good and a bad side about over-age pupils. The good side is that over-age pupils are admitted in primary schools, which could, in turn, reduce the illiteracy in young and middle-age people in the future. While they are young enough, they can be given a primary school education.

There are a lot of reasons for the low quality of education, among which are the problem of insufficient funds, equipment and textbooks, and the lack of administrative leaders of schools and management: but one of the most conspicuous problems is the teacher problem.

The teacher quality can be improved with better training and improved conditions.

The Minister of the Central Ministry of Education has proposed the main measures as follows:

1. Different places can plan on the basis of actual conditions of their locality to popularize primary education and fulfil the task down to counties, countryside and brigades. This is a national programme and after the programme has been defined, it must be carried through.

2. Through educational legislation, to guarantee to realize compulsory education which has been stipulated in the constitution of China. Although stipulated in related legal clauses in the past,

there is still no complete educational legislation for primary compulsory education. Recently, 'The Legislation for Universal Primary Compulsory Education of the People's Republic of China (draft)' was drawn up. After the legislation has been discussed and revised back and forth, it will be submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress for examination and approval, then announced and implemented.

3. To raise the quality of primary education, demands the establishment and smooth running of the central primary schools which are organized by the countryside and communes. They must carry out the Party's educational policy in an exemplary way, becoming the centres of primary educational research, teacher training, and the production of teaching apparatus, books and reference materials.

4. One of the most important measures in raising educational quality, is to develop pre-school education, so that the children can get education before they attend school. Therefore, not only should the educational departments set up demonstration kindergartens, but the success depends on factories, mines, enterprises, armies, residential districts and communes, and brigades in the countryside running kindergartens, at the same time, supported by the masses to organize them. It is planned to set up at least one pre-school normal school in most of provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions before 1985 to train new pre-school teachers and strengthen the training for in-service teachers. The vocational high schools can also run pre-school normal classes. Pre-school normal schools and teacher training schools must undertake the task to train in-service teachers.

5. By further raising the living standards and social position of primary school teachers, it is hoped to establish a steady, qualified rank of primary school teachers.

SELECTED APEID PUBLICATIONS
RELATING TO UNIVERSALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

- *Universalizing education: linking formal and non-formal programmes; report. 1979.*
- *Universalizing education: strategies for development and use of instructional materials; report. 1979.*
- *Universalizing education: selected innovative experiences: new techniques for preparing educational personnel. 1980.*
- *New personnel profiles in relation to changes in society and educational systems. 1980.*

  In-service teacher education: developing innovatory strategies and instructional materials; report. 1980.
- *Designing instructional materials for general education and teacher training: a portfolio of experiences in Asia and Oceania. 1980.*
- *Preparing educational personnel: training methodologies based on locally available learning resources; report. 1980.*

  Linking science education in real-life; curriculum design, development and implementation; report. 1980.

  Towards better health and nutrition; report. 1981.

  Social changes and new profiles of educational personnel; national studies: India, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea. 1981.

  Report of the study group meeting on evaluation and development of innovative methods of teaching with reference to problems of multiple classes and disadvantaged groups. 1981.

  Integrating subject areas in primary education curriculum—a joint innovative project; report. 1982.

  Distance learning for teacher education; report. 1982 (3 vols.)

  Multiple class teaching and education of disadvantaged groups; national studies: India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Republic of Korea. 1982.

  Learning needs and problems in primary education; report. 1983 (2 vols).

  Training of educational personnel for integrated curriculum; report. 1984.

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* Out of stock.

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